

Issues Brief

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Emergency Operations Center in the Works for Yakima

Federal grant provides funding for new center

The finishing touches are underway for the City of Yakima's new Emergency Operations Center. Located upstairs in the Richard A. Zais, Jr. Law and Justice Center, it occupies office space previously used by SunComm's 911 operations before it moved to a facility in Union Gap.

A federal Homeland Security grant covered the nearly \$17,000 required to establish the Emergency Operations Center, including installation of new work stations and large wall monitors to coordinate emergency response efforts and communicate with the public.

"This will be used when the City is experiencing a natural or human-caused emergency," Emergency Management Specialist Charles Erwin said. "Information sharing, taking care of the public is critical."

He said the Emergency Operations Center, established at no cost to the city, has work stations for the City's Fire, Police, Public Works, and Code Administration departments, as well as for communications.

A simulated airport exercise was held at the center on



Emergency Management Specialist Charles Erwin, left, leads a briefing in the City of Yakima's Emergency Operations Center.

September 7th to help fine-tune its operations. A ribbon cutting or dedication ceremony is planned this month as well, Erwin said.

Available space, grant funds, and this past spring's flooding were all catalysts for creating the center, Erwin said.

Unseasonably warm temperatures and precipitation resulted in flooding during March of this year.

Flooding led to evacuations at the Lake Aspen apartment complex, homes in the Aspen Village development, and Lake Aspen Business Park.

The area was without power for several days due to flooding, which occurred along Wide Hollow Creek impacting 80th Avenue and 72nd Avenue.

In February of this year, floodwaters impacted the West Valley area of Yakima and closed a stretch of North 66th Avenue.

The City relied on a mobile unit to respond at the scene, Erwin said. But there was no central coordination for all city departments to gather and coordinate efforts.

Now, the City has a mobile unit for first responders to assist at the scene of a disaster as well as the City's first centralized Emergency Operations Center to maintain communication and coordinate efforts.

Visit <https://yakimafire.com/emergency-management/> for more information about the City of Yakima's emergency preparations.

Councilmember Maureen Adkison Reflects on Progress

** Editor's Note: This is the next in a series of articles written by Yakima City Council members that are being published each month in the City of Yakima Issues Brief e-Newsletter.*

When I came to Yakima about four decades ago, I knew that I wanted to be involved in the community.

Over the years, I've served on a variety of boards and committees for various organizations and am proud of what I and the people I have served with have accomplished for Yakima.

As I became more ingrained in the community, serving in an elected office intrigued me. When a spot came open on the Council in 2009, I threw my hat in the ring . and I'm very glad I did.

Over the past eight years, the City Council has faced multiple challenges and had several successes. I'm proud of the start we have made on updating and enhancing city infrastructure.

I'm happy to have been part of adding more officers to our police department. I feel fortunate to have had a hand in beginning to build a solid and sustainable economy.

One of the greatest joys I've experienced during my tenure on the Council was being a member of Yakima's 2015 All-America City delegation.

The dedication and commitment of the 20-plus members of the delegation were extraordinary.

The friendships built and the teamwork demonstrated during the delegation's successful run



Maureen Adkison was first elected to the Yakima City Council in 2009 and currently holds the District #6 seat. She did not seek reelection in 2017. Her tenure on the Council will end on December 31st of this year.

at an All-America City Award warmed my heart. I am deeply honored to have played a role in Yakima winning its second All-America City Award in 2015 (the first was won in 1994).

There is still much work to be done, though. Restoring and preserving a sense of safety in our community has to continue to be a top priority for the City Council.

Our community needs to continue to recognize and adapt to the changing demographics of our area.

And, we need to continue to focus on the things that are good in Yakima, the things that are working here.

Yakima is a great place to live and work and play. Sometimes

we might not appreciate enough all that we do have here.

As my tenure on the Council draws closer and closer to an end, I've begun to realize I will miss being part of important decisions that help shape our community.

I will also miss the hardworking City staff, all of who I consider friends, who always kept me well informed and up to speed, which made it possible for the City to enjoy many successes during my tenure.

But I'm confident that people with bright minds and passionate commitment will continue to step forward to serve on the City Council and as City staff and take Yakima to even greater heights.

Humans and Canines Enjoy Paws in the Pool

Annual event a fundraiser for Humane Society

Swimmers both human and canine took the plunge during the 11th annual Paws in the Pool event on August 27th at the City of Yakima's Franklin Pool.

Yakima Parks and Recreation, in coordination with the Yakima Humane Society, organizes the event for dogs and their owners each year.

"The first year we hosted this event we had 50-60 dogs and their owners," said Recreation Program Supervisor Jason Zeller. "Over the years it has grown. Last year we had 140 dogs and the two years before that there were 160-170 dogs."

Pet owners must make sure their dogs are current on all shots and vaccinations. They are also responsible for cleaning up any messes their dogs make, Zeller said. No vicious dogs are permitted. Dogs must be leashed until inside the pool area.

During Paws in the Pool, the Yakima Humane Society distributed information about programs offered at the non-profit agency. In addition, donations were accepted for the Humane Society.



The City of Yakima's Franklin Pool again "went to the dogs" last month during the 11th annual Paws in the Pool event.

"We have a huge population of dog owners in Yakima and they're always looking for things to do with their pets."

- Annie Flores, Yakima Humane Society Community and Events Manager

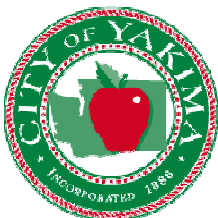
"We have a huge population of dog owners in Yakima and they're always looking for things to do with their pets," said Annie Flores, Community and Events Manager for the Yakima Humane Society.

"This event was created by a Recreation Supervisor and she had a huge love of rescued animals," Zeller said of the local Paws in the Pool's origins. "So she contacted the Humane Society of Yakima and put this event on to generate

awareness about what the Humane Society is and does."

The annual event also marks the last day of the summer swim season at Franklin Pool. "This is a great event that gives the dogs a chance to bring their owners swimming and have a great time in the pool," Zeller said.

Information about Yakima Parks and Recreation programs is available at <https://yakimaparks.com>.



The City of Yakima Issues Brief e-Newsletter is a monthly publication of the City of Yakima Community Relations Office. Questions or suggestions? Contact Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler at 509-575-6045 or randy.beehler@yakimawa.gov.

Visit <https://www.yakimawa.gov> for more information about the City of Yakima.